



January 18, 2024
2:00 p.m.
MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
THE WOODLANDS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Board of Directors for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau (TWCVB) of Montgomery County, Texas held their Board Meeting on January 18, 2024 at The Woodlands Township located at 2801 Technology Forest Boulevard, The Woodlands, Montgomery County, Texas, 77381 at 2:00 p.m. The roll was called and those in attendance were:

- Present:** Brad Bailey, Chairman
Jennifer Gohagan, Vice Chairman
Cameron Klepac, Director
Linda Nelson, Director
Monique Sharp, Director
Jenny Taylor, Director
- Absent:** Richard Franks, Secretary/Treasurer
- Staff Present:** Nick Wolda, President, Visit The Woodlands; Kelly Sullivan, Legal Counsel; Elizabeth Eddins, Executive Director; Ashley White, Marketing Director; Josie Lewis, Sales Director; Mary Murphy, Public Relations Coordinator; Julie Quinn, Servicing Specialist; Amber George, Communications Coordinator; Ashley Fenner, Senior Sales Manager; Gabby Pena, Administrative Analyst
- Attendees:** Aidan McSherry, The Woodlands Township Help Desk Analyst, Kellan Shaw, The Woodlands Township Chief Financial Officer

1. Pledge of Allegiance;

Led by Brad Bailey, Chairman.

2. Call to order and adoption of Agenda;

The meeting was called to order by legal counsel at 2:03 p.m., and a motion to adopt the meeting Agenda by the Members passed unanimously.

Motion by Director Jenny Taylor, seconded by Director Linda Nelson

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed

3. Public Comment;

None.

4. Consider and approve Minutes from the December 2023 Regular Board Meeting;

Motion to approve the December 2023 Minutes passed unanimously.

Motion by Vice Chairman Jennifer Gohagan, seconded by Director Jenny Taylor

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed

5. Incumbent Directors resolve to increase number of Directors for The Woodlands Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors;

Legal Counsel Kelly Sullivan explained addition of Directors procedures to the Members. The motion to increase the number of Board Directors from 7 to 8 passed unanimously.

Motion by Chairman Brad Bailey, seconded by Director Linda Nelson

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed

6. Members Elect the Directors for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau Board of Directors;

Legal Counsel Kelly Sullivan explained Election of Director procedures to the Members appointed by The Woodlands Township Board of Directors, which are Brad Bailey and Linda Nelson.

Ms. Sullivan distributed ballots to the Members appointed by The Woodlands Township Board of Directors. The two Members present elected the following individuals to serve as Directors until the 2025 Annual Meeting: Brad Bailey, Linda Nelson, Richard Franks, Fred Domenick, Cameron Klepac, Monique Sharp, Kim Lowe, and Jenny Taylor.

7. Directors Elect Officers for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau;

Kelly Sullivan explained procedures of electing officers and distributed ballots to the Directors. The Directors elected Brad Bailey as Chairman, Linda Nelson as Vice Chairman, Richard Franks as Secretary/Treasurer, and Nick Wolda was elected as President.

8. Consider and approve Financial Report through November 2023;

Kellan Shaw, Township Chief Financial Officer, delivered the Financial Report. At the end of November, year-to-date revenues totaled \$2,993,390 compared to a \$3,033,299 budget, resulting in an unfavorable variance of \$39,909. The supplemental hotel tax revenue showed a favorable variance of \$140,409 and there was a favorable variance in interest income. There was an unfavorable variance in operating transfers of \$207,260. The unfavorable variance was a result of The Woodlands Township transferring less supplemental tax to Visit The Woodlands than budgeted due to expenditures being less than budgeted.

The year-to-date expenditures at the end of November totaled \$3,142,185 compared to budgeted expenditures of \$3,183,299 resulting in a favorable variance of \$41,114.

As of November 30, 2023, the undesignated fund balance for Visit The Woodlands was \$1,087,004.

Motion to approve the Financial Report through November 2023 passed unanimously.

Motion by Vice Chairman Jennifer Gohagan, seconded by Director Cameron Klepac

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed

9. Receive, consider and act upon an update from Symphony by Tourism Economics;

Due to the rescheduling of the meeting, the guest was unable to make the new date. No action was taken.

10. Receive, consider and act upon 2024 legal services for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau;

President Wolda asked the Board to renew Visit The Woodlands legal services agreement with The Strong Firm. Visit The Woodlands has a long-standing relationship with The Strong Firm and they are familiar with Visit The Woodlands contracts and structure. The Strong Firm also provides a reduced rate of all attorneys based on the long-term relationship. The Strong Firm is located locally in The Woodlands and is familiar with Visit The Woodlands mission.

Motion to approve The Strong Firm for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau's legal counsel for services in 2024 and authorize the President to execute a contract in connection there with passed unanimously.

Motion by Director Jenny Taylor, seconded by Director Linda Nelson

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed

11. Receive, consider and act upon Marketing and Sales Committee Appointments;

Executive Director Elizabeth Eddins presented the appointments for the Marketing Committee which consists of local partners that work in alignment with Visit The Woodlands. Ms. Eddins also presented the appointments for the Sales Committee that consists of local hotel and hospitality partners that work in conjunction with Visit The Woodlands.

Chairman Bailey said that it is important to have great representation on the committees.

Motion to approve the 2024 Marketing and Sales Committee Appointments passed unanimously.

Motion by Vice Chairman Jennifer Gohagan, seconded by Director Jenny Taylor

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed

12. Receive, consider, and act upon cost expectations for hosting Texas Society of Association Executives (TSAE) New Ideas Conference in The Woodlands;

Sales Director Josie Lewis gave an update to the Board in the planning process for TSAE New Ideas Conference coming to The Woodlands in September. TSAE represents \$2.5 billion spent at Association Conferences and Events with 46,000 meetings held annually in Texas with over 11.6 million attendees. This event gives Visit The Woodlands the opportunity to showcase The Woodlands to the Texas and National Association markets. The Board was given additional resources that highlighted expectations to host the event as well as a letter of support from Director Kim Lowe, who previously served on the Sales Advisory Committee.

Vice Chairman Linda Nelson asked how much money was allotted in planning Connect Texas in comparison to the \$150,000 that is needed for TSAE. Mrs. Lewis said that the Board approved \$100,000 and just under that was spent on the event. TSAE New Ideas is twice the size of Connect Texas in attendance, but the Sales Team is confident that they will be able to execute this event with \$150,000.

Director Jenny Taylor asked if that amount is comparable to what other destinations have spent hosting that event in the past. Mrs. Lewis said that she has spoken with three previous host destinations that have spent between \$110,000 to \$140,000. Visit The Woodlands is requesting this amount due to the fact that there will be an Opening Night Reception that requires a larger event space, which limits venues in The Woodlands.

Director Jennifer Gohagan said that this piece of business helps out hotels during a time of need due to business slowing down during the hot months.

Director Jenny Taylor asked if \$150,000 was enough to host the event. The Sales Team feels confident in being able to execute the event with the requested funds. There will be resources that were made for Connect Texas that will be used again at TSAE New Ideas.

Motion to accept the budget as proposed for TSAE New Ideas Conference, not to exceed \$150,000 from fund balance, and a 2024 Budget Amendment in connection therewith passed unanimously.

Motion by Director Jenny Taylor, seconded by Vice Chairman Jennifer Gohagan

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed

13. Receive, consider and act upon establishing The Woodlands, Texas as a premier destination for fine dining in Texas, nationally and internationally.

Ms. Eddins reported on establishing Dine The Woodlands. This will be a program that will consist of Ambassador opportunities for The Woodlands Chefs to showcase their restaurants and give visitors a better dining experience. Some of the tactics that Visit The Woodlands is using to jumpstart this program are as follows:

- Support the hospitality community as the Presenting Sponsor at Taste of the Town, January 25, 2024, at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott, a project of The Woodlands Area Chamber of Commerce. Through Visit The Woodlands promotion, six additional restaurants have signed up to participate.

- Create a video series and promotional appearances for local chefs.
- Video Series examples to feature chefs.
- Why The Woodlands? What makes The Woodlands the best destination for outstanding experiences?
- Stories from The Kitchen Interview his favorite Chefs and bites around The Woodlands.
- Day in the Life Chef life in The Woodlands.
- Featured dishes and inspiration.
- APR schedule featuring fine dining on Houston TV and digital channels.
- Establishment of CEO/VIP/Influencer media events at TRIS that draw a “foodie” crowd for content creators.
- Attend and showcase The Woodlands at nationally recognized Food and Wine, as well as, strategic events.
- Visit The Woodlands Press/Media tour to feature fine dining-during a signature weekend such as WWAFF.
- Continued to highlight restaurants, chefs, wine programs, specialty culinary experiences in VTW promotion and #SoWoodlands publication.
- Utilize Visit The Woodlands Show Your Badge program to create a fine dining guide for groups and conventions.
- Utilize Bandwango to create dining trails, passport, guide launched during NTTW to include Hotel packages.
- Wine and Food Week/Wine Walk Elevate the experience.
- Summer 2024 Partner event/cultural exchange with international partners.
- Long table dinner.
- Consider a new signature dining Wine and Food Festival along The Woodlands Waterway.
- Partner with dining/wine magazine.

Visit The Woodlands is requesting Board approval for \$25,000 to be allotted to this project from the existing Strategic Partnerships budget.

Motion to move forward with projects listed, not to exceed initial cost of \$25,000, and future projects be presented to the Board for approval passed unanimously.

Motion by Director Cameron Klepac, seconded by Vice Chairman Jennifer Gohagan

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed

14. Staff Initiative Reports;

Executive Director Elizabeth Eddins announced that the Texas Travel Alliance Unity Dinner will be held at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott on February 12, 2024. This event will bring 400 to 500 people to The Woodlands from all across Texas that are Destination Marketers and Hospitality.

Marketing Director Ashley White reported on 2023 numbers and statistics. There were 199 Advertising Placements across 29 publications. There were 62 million digital impressions, which consisted of 3.7 million clicks. On the website, there was 1.2 million total users. The Top 5 pages visited included The Pavilion, Events, Things To Do, Restaurants, and Home Page. Visit The Woodlands social audience is just under 60,500 followers, with a net growth of over 11,500 followers for 2023. In Media/PR, 35 awards were entered on behalf of Visit The Woodlands, with 21 winning awards.

Mrs. White also reported that Visit The Woodlands recently completed a brand assessment and are currently developing a new logo in collaboration with Adcetera, its Agency of Record. The new logo, along with campaign concepts and a more defined brand promise, will be brought to the Board for approval in February. Mrs. White gave an update on the new booking engine and said a

feature that will be available beginning in early February. Website users will have the ability to filter their search for hotels with a waterfront view, trolley stop and other features.

Sales Director Josie Lewis reported on Sales Team Highlights in 2023. 184 sales leads were generated representing 86,000 rooms, which resulted in an economic impact of over \$28 million. The Sales Team booked or assisted in booking 84 pieces of business, representing over 28,000 room nights with an economic impact of over \$14.7 million. 22 tradeshows/client events were attended, representing 223 one-on-one appointments. 115 groups were serviced consisting of thousands of welcome bags. The Sales Team left the Board meeting to meet with TSAE meeting planners on-site at The Woodlands Resort to kickstart the planning process for the event later this year. Julie Quinn, Servicing Specialist, has started the planning for Lunar Planetary Science Conference Food Truck Village in March. The Sales Team is planning on debuting the Backyard Sales Campaign at the Economic Outlook Conference. Ashley Fenner, Senior Sales Manager, has recently booked the Tour of Texas Volleyball Group representing 480 room nights.

Motion by Director Linda Nelson, seconded by Director Cameron Klepac

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed

15. Recess to Executive Session to discuss matters relating to real property pursuant to §551.072, Texas Government Code; deliberation of economic development negotiations pursuant to §551.087, Texas Government Code; discuss personnel matters pursuant to §551.074, Texas Government Code; and to consult with the Corporation's attorney pursuant to §551.071, Texas Government Code;

16. No Executive Session.

17. President's Report;

President Nick Wolda extended thanks to Elizabeth Eddins for bringing The Texas Travel Alliance Unity Dinner to The Woodlands. He congratulated Vice Chairman Nelson on extending the Memorial Hermann IRONMAN Texas contract for another 5 years.

18. Board Announcements;

Director Jenny Taylor said that Yeti will be opening at Market Street on January 25, 2024.

Director Jennifer Gohagan said that The Woodlands Waterway Marriott will be starting renovations to the lobby and restaurant and the M Club starting in August of 2024.

Director Cameron Klepac said that The Pavilion has projected 50 shows in the 2024 season.

19. Agenda items for next meeting;

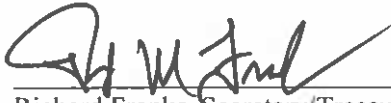
None.

20. Adjournment at 3:11 p.m.

Motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

Motion by Director Jenny Taylor, seconded by Vice Chairman Jennifer Gohagan

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed



Richard Franks, Secretary/Treasurer
The Woodlands CVB Board of Directors

20 March 2029

Date